International Travel

Travel into Canada with a group of youth requires careful planning. The documentation required to travel outside the US (passports and passport cards) may take several months to acquire.
Please read the following information carefully. If you have any additional questions, please consult the US Customs and Border Protection webpage http://www.cbp.gov, the US Department of State on travel to Canada http://www.travel.state.gov, as well as the Canada Border Services Agency's website http://www.cbsa.gc.ca/.

Please follow these steps to insure safe and conflict-free border crossings:

1. All participants need a passport (or passport card - US citizens only) to cross the border back into the USA. Getting a passport can take several months – if you need a passport, start this process well in advance of your trip. Passport cards **cannot** be used for international air travel.

    a. Permanent Residents of the US should carry their US Permanent Resident or Alien Registration card **and** their passport from their country of citizenship.

    b. Participants who are not US Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents of the US should contact US Immigration services to inquire about the documentation they need to re-enter the US. Participants who are not US Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents of the US or Canadian Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents of Canada should also contact Canadian Immigration services to inquire about the documentation required to enter Canada.

    c. Participants may use an alternative form of approved ID such as an enhanced driver's license or NEXUS card in place of a passport for land travel. For more information on these options see: http://www.getyouhome.gov/html/lang_eng/eng_usp.html

    d. Participants aged 16-19 who are traveling with a youth group may present a government issued photo ID (such as a driver's license or state ID card) **and** an original proof of citizenship document (such as a birth certificate) in place of a passport. Participants aged 15 and under may present an original proof of citizenship (such as a birth certificate) in place of a passport (photo ID is still recommended- such as a school ID or state ID card). If the participant has or can obtain a passport prior to their travel date it is highly recommended that you do so.

2. All youth 17 and under must present a "Parental Release Form" when crossing the border, allowing them to travel internationally. This form can be found on the Northern Tier website: http://www.ntier.org/resources/.

    a. The Parental Release Form must be signed by **all** parents/ legal guardians and have their full contact information (phone number and address). Children with special circumstances (death of a parent, legal guardian, etc.) should bring proof of their custody arrangement or supporting documents.
    b. The Canadian government is very concerned about the trafficking of children across the border. They require these documents to ensure that all children are crossing the border with the consent of all legal guardians. While currently, the Parental Release Form does not require a notarization, rules may change in the future to become stricter.

3. Anyone with a criminal record (including misdemeanors or alcohol-related driving offenses) may not be able to enter Canada without first obtaining a special waiver well in advance of any planned travel. To determine whether you may be inadmissible and how to overcome this finding, please visit http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/ivc-rnc-eng.html#a3a

4. For information on what you may bring into Canada or bring back from Canada into the US please refer to the following websites:

    a. Entering Canada:
    b. http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/ivc-rnc-eng.html#a2

    c. Returning to the USA:
    d. http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/kbyg/prohibited-restricted